

# CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF

POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART.

*Fourth Series*

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 804.

SATURDAY, MAY 24, 1879.

PRICE 1½d.

## ANECDOCTES OF ARTISTS.

LOVERS of Art are becoming more numerous year by year ; and—though not perhaps in exact proportion—there is in consequence a growing interest in the men who are producing and have produced the wonderful works which delight us so much. A number of very interesting facts and anecdotes about Art and Artists have been recently collected and published by Mr Diprose, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London. A few of these we append.

Sir David Wilkie from the character of his delineations will always be a great favourite. We are here told how he became a painter. 'Sir John Sinclair happening once to dine in company with Wilkie, asked in the course of conversation if any particular circumstance had led him to adopt his profession. Sir John inquired : "Had your father, mother, or any of your relations a turn for painting ? or what led you to follow that art ?"

"To which Wilkie replied : "The truth is, Sir John, that *you* made me a painter."

"How ! I ?" exclaimed the Baronet. "I never had the pleasure of meeting you before."

Wilkie then gave the following explanation : "When you were drawing up the *Statistical Account of Scotland*, my father, who was a clergyman in Fife, had much correspondence with you respecting his parish ; in the course of which you sent him a coloured drawing of a soldier in the uniform of your Highland Fencible Regiment. I was so delighted with the sight, that I was constantly drawing copies of it ; and thus, insensibly, I was transformed into a painter."

'Never,' relates Haydon, 'was anything more extraordinary than the modesty and simplicity of Wilkie at the period of his production of "The Village Politicians." Jackson told me he had the greatest difficulty in persuading him to send this celebrated picture to the Exhibition ; and said he : "I remember his bewildered astonishment at the prodigious enthusiasm of the people at the Exhibition, when it went May 1806."

'On the Sunday after the private day and dinner,

*The News* said : "A young Scotchman, by name Wilkie, has a wonderful work." I (Haydon) immediately sallied forth, took up Jackson, and away we rushed to Wilkie. We found him in his parlour in Norton Street, at breakfast. "Wilkie," said I, "your name is in the paper." "Is it really ?" said he, staring with delight. I then read the puff *ore rotundo* (in a clear voice) ; and Jackson, I, and he in an ecstasy joined hands and danced round the table.'

We must not pass from Wilkie without relating the following amusing story. 'On the birth of the son of a friend—afterwards a popular novelist—Sir David Wilkie was requested to become one of the sponsors for the child. Sir David, whose studies of human nature extended to everything but infant human nature, had evidently been refreshing his boyish recollections of kittens and puppies, for after looking intently into the child's eyes as it was held up for his inspection, he exclaimed to the father with serious astonishment and satisfaction : "He sees!"'

'During the residence in England of Haydn the celebrated composer, one of the royal Princes commissioned Sir Joshua Reynolds to paint his [Haydn's] portrait. Haydn went to the residence of the painter and gave him a sitting ; but he soon grew tired. Sir Joshua, with his usual care for his reputation, would not paint a man of such distinguished genius with a stupid countenance, and in consequence he adjourned the sitting to another day. The same weariness and want of expression occurring at the next attempt, Sir Joshua communicated the circumstance to the commissioning Prince, who contrived the following stratagem. He sent to the painter's house a pretty German girl who was in the service of the Queen. Haydn took his seat for the third time ; and as soon as the conversation began to flag, a curtain rose, and the fair German addressed him in his native tongue with a most elegant compliment. Haydn, delighted, overwhelmed the enchantress with questions ; his countenance recovered its animation, and Sir Joshua rapidly and successfully seized its traits.'

'Opie was once painting an old beau of fashion.

Whenever this gentleman thought the painter was touching the mouth, he screwed it up in a most ridiculous manner. Opie, who was a blunt man, said very quietly: "Sir, if you want the mouth left out, I will do it with pleasure."

To return to Sir Joshua Reynolds. We are told of his 'Puck' that 'this merry imp is the portrait of a child, which was painted without any particular aim as to character. When Alderman Boydell saw it, he said: "Sir Joshua, if you will make this pretty thing into a Puck for my *Shakspeare Gallery*, I will give you a hundred guineas for it." The painter smiled and said little, as was his custom. A few hours' happy labour made the picture what we see it.'

'Sir Joshua once hearing of a young artist who had become embarrassed by an injudicious marriage, and was on the point of being arrested, immediately hurried to his residence, to inquire into the case. The unfortunate artist told the melancholy particulars of his situation; adding that forty pounds would enable him to compound with his creditors. After some further conversation, Sir Joshua rose to take his leave, telling the distressed painter he would do something for him. When bidding him adieu at the door, Sir Joshua took him by the hand, and after squeezing it cordially, hurried off with a benevolent triumph in his heart; while the astonished and relieved artist found in his hand a bank-note for one hundred pounds!'

Of Gainsborough we are told that 'both himself and his neighbours were ignorant of his genius, until one day—he was then residing at Sudbury—seeing a country fellow looking wistfully over his garden wall at some pears, he caught up a bit of board, and painted him so inimitably well that, the board being placed upon the wall, several of the neighbouring gentry and farmers immediately recognised the figure of a thief who had paid many unwelcome visits to their gardens; and being, by means of this impromptu portrait, charged by one of them with the robbery of his orchard, the thief acknowledged his guilt, and agreed, in order to avoid a worse fate, to enlist.'

Haydon's 'Mock Election' was painted in this wise. As many other artists have been both before and since, Haydon was in difficulties, and in July 1827 was an inmate of the King's Bench Prison. One day some of his fellow-prisoners got up a burlesque of an election. 'I was sitting in my own apartment,' writes the painter, 'buried in my own reflections, melancholy, but not despairing, at the darkness of my prospects and the unprotected condition of my wife and children, when a tumultuous and hearty laugh below brought me to my window. In spite of my own sorrows, I laughed out heartily when I saw the occasion.'

Haydon sketched the grotesque scene, painted it in four months, with the aid of noblemen and friends, and the advocacy of the press in exciting the sympathy of the country. The picture proved

attractive as an exhibition; still better, it was purchased by King George IV. for five hundred pounds; and it was conveyed from the Egyptian Hall to St James's Palace. A committee of gentlemen then undertook Mr Haydon's affairs; and with the purchase-money of the picture and the proceeds of the exhibition, the painter was restored to his family. In 1828 he painted, as a companion to this picture, 'The Chairing of the Members,' which was bought by Mr Francis of Exeter for three hundred guineas.

"Not one in ten thousand perhaps," it has been said, "can move his ears." The celebrated Mr Mery used, when lecturing, to amuse his pupils by saying that in one thing he surely belonged to the long-eared tribe; upon which he would move his ears very rapidly backwards and forwards. Albinus the celebrated anatomist had the same power, which is performed by little muscles not seen. Mr Haydon tried it once in painting, with great effect. In his picture of "Macbeth," painted for Sir George Beaumont, when the Thane was listening in horror, before committing the murder, the artist ventured to press the ears forward like an animal in fright, to give an idea of trying to catch the nearest sound. It is very effective, and increases amazingly the terror of the scene, without the spectator's being aware of the reason.'

A very interesting fact, which will be new to many, is thus given. 'That Tenterden steeple was the cause of Goodwin Sands does not appear a whit more strange than that in the Foundling Hospital originated the Royal Academy of Arts. Yet such was the case. The Hospital was incorporated in 1739, and in a few years the present building was erected; but as the income of the charity could not with propriety be expended upon decorations, many of the principal artists of that day generously gave pictures for several of the apartments of the Hospital. These were permitted to be shewn to the public upon proper application; and hence became one of the sights of the metropolis. The pictures proved very attractive; and this success suggested the annual exhibition of the united artists, which institution was the precursor of the Royal Academy in the Adelphi, founded in the year 1760. Thus within the walls of the Foundling the curious may see the state of British art previous to the epoch when King George III. first countenanced the historical talent of West.'

"Among the earliest "governors and guardians" of the Hospital we find William Hogarth, who liberally subscribed his money, and gave his time and talent towards carrying out the designs of his friend the venerable Captain Coram, through whose zeal and humanity the Hospital was established. Hogarth's first artistical aid was the engraving of a headpiece to a power-of-attorney, drawn for the collection of subscriptions towards the charity. Hogarth next presented to the Hospital an engraved plate of Coram. Among the

other early artistic patrons of the charity we find Rysbrach the sculptor, Hudson, Allan Ramsay, and Richard Wilson the prince of English landscape painters. They met often at the Hospital, and thus advanced charity and the arts together; for the exhibition of their donations in paintings, &c. drew a daily crowd of visitors in splendid carriages; and a visit to the Foundling became the most fashionable morning lounge of the reign of George II. The grounds in front of the Hospital were the promenade, and brocaded silks, gold-headed canes, and laced three-cornered hats formed, with their wearers, a gay sight in Lamb's Conduit Fields.

We turn now from our own countrymen to foreign artists and the ancient masters. Vernet, the grandfather of the late famous French painter of the same name, relates that he was once employed to paint a landscape with a cave and St Jerome in it. He accordingly painted the landscape with St Jerome at the entrance of the cave. When he delivered the picture, the purchaser, who understood nothing of perspective, said: "The landscape and the cave are well made; but the saint is not in the cave."

"I understand you, sir," replied Vernet. "I will alter it." He therefore took the painting, and made the shade darker, so that the saint seemed to sit farther in. The purchaser took the painting; but it again appeared to him that the figure was not in the cave. Vernet then obliterated the figure, and gave the picture to the purchaser, who now at last seemed perfectly satisfied. Whenever he shewed the picture to strangers, he said: "Here you have a picture by Vernet, with St Jerome in the cave."

"But we cannot see the saint," the visitors would reply.

"Excuse me, gentlemen," the possessor would answer; "he is there; for I have seen him standing at the entrance, and afterwards farther back, and am therefore quite sure that he is in it!"

Rubens seems to have been a remarkably diligent painter. "We are enabled to form some estimate of his astonishingly productive powers, when we consider that about one thousand of his works have been engraved. An extraordinary number of his paintings adorn the most celebrated public and private galleries, and many churches in different parts of Europe. Yet of the countless pictures everywhere attributed to Rubens, but a small proportion were entirely painted by his own hands; the others contain more or less of the workmanship of his pupils. Like many other great painters, Rubens was an architect too; his own house and the Church and College of the Jesuits in Antwerp were built from his designs."

We shall conclude with the following amusing list of anachronisms in painting. "These are to be found in works of all ages. Thus we have Verrio's *periwigged* spectators of "Christ healing the Sick"; Abraham about to shoot Isaac with a *pistol*; an Ethiopian king in a *surplice*, *boots* and *spurs*; Belini's "Virgin and Child" listening to a *violin*; and in Albert Dürer's "Angel driving Adam and Eve from Paradise," the angel wearing a *flounced petticoat*. Then we have Cigoli's "Simeon at the Circumcision" with *spectacles on nose*; the Virgin Mary helping herself to a *cup of coffee* from a chased *coffee-pot*; and St Jerome painted with a *clock* by his side. N. Poussin

has represented "The Deluge" with *boats*; and "Rebecca at the Well" with *Grecian* architecture in the background. And in a picture representing "Lobsters in the Sea listening to the Preaching of St Anthony of Padua," the lobsters are *red*; though yet it is to be presumed *unboiled*."

#### YOUNG LORD PENRITH.

##### CHAPTER XXVIII.—IN WHICH LADY LARPENT RECEIVES A VISIT.

"A PERSON, my Lady, that very much wishes to see your Ladyship, please!" said the chief-butler, sliding deferentially on noiseless feet up to the corner of the Dowager's writing-table, in that study wherein the lady of Llosthuel, as has been mentioned, transacted most of the business that forms a necessary sequence to the possession of landed property.

"What sort of person?" asked Lady Larpent, putting down her pen.

The butler coughed. "Very respectably dressed, my Lady. Did not seem to like giving his name. From another part of the country, he said."

Now the butler-in-chief at Llosthuel Court knew his duty, as he would himself have modestly declared, and was as thoroughly imbued with the traditions of butlerdom as any member of the fraternity of men-servants within the compass of Britain. It would, to him, have been a labour of love to turn from the door any person of either sex, however decent in manner and apparel, who should presume to seek admission without stating reason and giving a name. But Lady Larpent had some peculiarities. She was as easy of access as Dryden's rhymes record Lord Chancellor Shaftesbury to have been, and would rather have endured importunity than run the risk of shutting her ears against some well-founded complaint or cry of distress.

"You may shew the person in, Parker!" said the mistress of Llosthuel; and the obedient butler forthwith went in quest of the anonymous applicant for admission, ushered him into the Dowager's room of business, and retired.

"You wished to speak to me, Mr—Mr"—said Lady Larpent, to give the visitor an opportunity for self-introduction.

"I do, very much, wish to say a few words to your Ladyship," returned the man with grave politeness; and there was something in the inflection of his deep voice, harsh, but modulated as those of the uneducated never are, which struck upon her ear, and made her eye the speaker more attentively than she had done before. At first sight she had set down the man, middle-aged, swarthy, ill-favoured of feature, and neatly clad in a suit of glossy black broadcloth, as a farmer seeking a farm, or perhaps a mining captain. Now, she was more disposed to consider him as a civil engineer, or possibly the promoter of some Company travelling in search of shareholders, to be recruited by the aid of a fluent tongue and an alluring prospectus.

"On what subject, may I ask? Please to be seated," said Lady Larpent.

"I thank you, my Lady; but I prefer to stand," replied the man, in whom the reader has no doubt recognised the Miller of Pen Mawth. "And I will be as brief—knowing your Ladyship's time to be of value—as I can. All I ask is a fair and

patient hearing—yes, and one thing more, my Lady; that is, that you will be so kind as to bear in mind that, in doing what I do, I have no private object to gain, no selfish ends to compass, but act, in this instance, wholly and solely for the sake of truth and justice.'

This was very plausibly spoken, and with a weight of emphasis that would not have been thrown away upon any audience. Lady Larpent was impressed, in spite of herself, yet she did not altogether like the speaker, and did not by any means feel inclined to put implicit confidence in his assertions.

The Black Miller was not one of those who carry about with them that most ancient and natural of all letters of introduction which a frank and honest face affords. Still, the man might be honest. And Lady Larpent was not one of those rich persons who drape themselves in the comfortable mantle of indolence, and who would sooner be cheated, if only the cheating were decorously conducted behind their august backs, than submit to be pestered with unwelcome revelations. The Dowager had in her, in fact, somewhat of the turn of mind which has prompted kings and caliphs ere now to go about their capitals in mean disguise, and under the cloud of their incognito to feel, as it were, the popular pulse.

'I shall be happy to listen to whatever you may have to tell me, Mr— By the way, you have not yet mentioned your name,' said the Dowager.

'I have not told you my name, my Lady,' answered Ralph Swart with perfect composure; 'and with your permission, I will continue to be nameless. My poor personality goes for nothing in what I have to say. I am well aware,' he continued, as his keen eye noted the signs of displeasure in Lady Larpent's face, 'that by withholding my own name I excite prejudice against myself and my story. The current of vulgar opinion sets strongly against those who blame others, and refuse to be confronted with the object of the accusation. Such persons are called by evil names. They are calumniators. They are base and malignant, and cowardly to boot. They are stabbers in the dark. Yet a man may have good and sufficient reasons for not backing up the word of warning which he finds it his duty to utter, by weighing his own credibility against that of the subject of it.'

This was very artfully imagined. It is sometimes good diplomatic policy to oustrip the judgment of an unfriendly critic, and to forestall, so to speak, all the severe things that he will be sure to think; just as Napoleon in a campaign was accustomed to discount the inevitable strategic blunders of his adversaries. The Black Miller, too, may have divined that Lady Larpent was precisely the person to pique herself on her own exemption from common prejudice. At anyrate, the stratagem met with at least a partial success, for the Dowager knit her judicial brows, and said calmly: 'I will hear whatever you have come to tell me, sir, although you do not give me your name.'

'I thank your Ladyship,' rejoined the Black Miller, in a voice as weighty as her own, 'for your courtesy.—And now to business. There is a young man in Trepore here in the position, thanks to your Ladyship's patronage, of Captain of a coasting steam-vessel.'

'Are you speaking of Captain Ashton, of Hugh Ashton?' exclaimed the Dowager, half-incredulously, and opening her eyes a good deal wider than before.

'That is the name he bears,' replied the Black Miller, as composedly as before; 'Hugh—Ashton.'

'Do you mean to imply,' asked the Dowager, with feminine quickness, 'that his name is not Ashton?'

'I imply, my Lady, nothing of the sort,' returned Ralph Swart slowly. 'One thing I do say, and that plainly—Hugh Ashton is absolutely unworthy of your Ladyship's favour and protection. That much I know; and that much, and no more, I repeat. Hugh—Ashton, if you please—is not deserving of the station he fills, or of the confidence reposed in him.'

'Are you aware,' demanded the Dowager, in a glow of generous indignation, 'that the noble young fellow whom you traduce has rendered the very greatest service to our family—that he saved, at the risk of his own, the life of my niece, Miss Stanhope?'

'I never denied his courage, my Lady,' replied Ralph Swart, with a slight sneer, that made him even uglier than before. 'He is bold enough, and a smart lad in his way; and more's the pity that he should have deceived you, as he has done.'

'Deceived me!' repeated Lady Larpent, with an involuntary echo of the man's words, and then she looked the accuser full in the face. 'You must prove your words, and explain them, if you wish to be believed.'

'I beg your Ladyship's pardon, I am sure,' returned the Black Miller, with an affected humility which seemed genuine, so well did he control the voice in which he spoke. 'I have given offence, I fear, by unmasking the real character of one in whom your Ladyship feels an interest, and perhaps I had better go.' And Ralph Swart picked up his hat, which had been placed on the chair before him, and seemed about to depart. Of course Lady Larpent bade him stay. She would have been more or less than woman if she had not. A secret undivulged, and this grim, stern, mysterious denouncer threatening to leave the whole problem an insoluble riddle!

At the Dowager's request, then, Ralph Swart of Pen Mawth Mill laid down his hat again, and addressed himself to speak. 'For the sake of truth and justice, my Lady,' he said, 'I have come here, and for the sake of truth and justice I will comply with your Ladyship's wish that I should speak out more positively than I have hitherto done. You think me a coward perhaps, my Lady, because I do not choose to make my charges in the young man's presence, face to face, and stand or fall according to their proved truth. Now, I am not good-looking—not nice, as you ladies call it—a queer, cross-grained lump of a man. But I ask your Ladyship, do I look the sort of person to flinch from the angry looks, or words, or blows of any man, be it even your fisherman hero—if I thought fit, my Lady, to confront them?'

As he spoke, he seemed, like some vulture or other bird of prey, to draw back the dull film that coated his fierce eyes, and all the defiant ferocity of his rugged and masculine nature kindled in them at once. Lady Larpent noted

the rigidity of the tigerish mouth, the black frown on the massive brow, and the ominous brightness of the strong man's terrible eyes; and, with female rapidity of logic, she jumped at the conclusion that as her visitor was palpably not a craven, so he was presumably not a rogue. 'I do not believe that you would be easily alarmed,' she said.

'Then credit me, my Lady,' answered the Black Miller, with his ponderous emphasis of diction, 'with telling the truth, until evidence proves me to be a liar. I say that young Hugh, there, is unworthy of your confidence. I intend the young Captain of the *Western Maid* to be his own accuser. Test him! Ask him if, in what he has told your Ladyship regarding his past life, he has kept nothing back. Ask him if it be not true that he is not what he seems. Ply him with fair, simple, straightforward questions, most easy for an honest man to answer, and mark the effect. His own conscience will do the rest. He will be uncertain as to the extent of your Ladyship's knowledge of his antecedents, and you will see him wince, and hear him stammer, and see the red of conscious guilt suffuse that bold forehead of his. If he give you the explanation you have the right—I feel your Ladyship has the right—to demand, then, Lady Larpent, say and think the worst of me that ever was thought. But, if not, thank me for my warning!'

As he spoke, the slouching attitude of the Black Miller grew erect and dignified, his arm was outstretched, and his voice almost lost its habitual harshness, to become sonorous and clear in its fierce earnestness. Then with a bow, not such as rustics give, Ralph Swart took his leave, briefly declining all offers of refreshment, and striding to the outer door before the hurrying servant could reach it in response to the summons of the bell.

'Done the trick, I reckon, unless the legacy of Mother Eve to her daughters has, for once, gone astray!' muttered the Black Miller to himself, as he strode rapidly down the well-kept winding road.

#### A GLIMPSE OF OVERSEERING IN DEMERARA.

FROM a gentleman of experience in the sugar-estates of Demerara, we have received the following useful and interesting observations. He says: 'As many young men go out to Demerara as overseers on sugar-estates, I purpose putting before those now contemplating such a step the following short statement of what they really will experience on reaching that colony. I am induced to do so from the fact that many young men arrive in the colony to become overseers who are totally unfitted for such a life, and who very soon acknowledge the truth of this themselves. I intend dealing with the profession of a planter only so far as it concerns Demerara—which includes Berbice and Essequibo—and my remarks do not apply to planting as a beginner would find it in the islands. I have, however, good authority for saying that the profession in Trinidad, Barbadoes, and Jamaica for instance, is very much more trying and less remunerative than in

Demerara. The writer has been a planter himself in Demerara for several years, and the information which will now be placed before his readers may be relied on as correct.

'To commence then. What sort of a place is a sugar-estate in Demerara? A plantation is a piece of land having from three to fifteen hundred acres in cultivation. The usual size of an estate is about nine hundred acres; but the largest—as for instance the plantation Anna Regina in Essequibo—have as many as fourteen or fifteen hundred acres planted in canes; while there are some possessing only three hundred acres, or even less. I may remark here that a beginner should if possible try to avoid getting placed on one of these very small properties. On each estate there are always to be found the following buildings—generally situated close together. 1. A large and commodious manager's house. 2. An hospital for the indentured and resident labourers when sick. 3. The manufactory, termed in local phraseology the "buildings." 4. The labourers' cottages and ranges, including what is termed a Portugee shop. 5. And last, but not least, the overseers' house, about which I shall say a few words. This is generally a long one-storied building on brick pillars, from eight to fourteen feet high, containing four to eight rooms, with a gallery in front about eight feet wide, running the whole length of the house. On some estates these houses are very wretched and old; but they are generally improving.

'The estates are situated from one to eighteen miles distant from Georgetown in Demerara, and from one to nine from New Amsterdam in Berbice, with a few exceptions. The estates on the east coast of Demerara are the most conveniently situated for visiting, as there is a railroad running past them to Mahaica. Mail-wagons however, are in use all over the colony, and the roads, generally speaking, are very good.

'A young man reaches the colony either indentured to a certain employer or merely on speculation, carrying with him perhaps a few introductory letters. In the latter case, it is certainly probable that he may procure a situation as overseer; but in my opinion, a young man has a far greater chance of ultimate success and promotion if he lands in the colony under a three years' indenture to a certain firm. The Colonial Company, London, the Messrs Ewing & Co., Glasgow, and Mr St Quintin Hogg, himself a large proprietor, send out many young men thus yearly. An overseer going out from home under agreement will have his passage paid for him, and be supplied with the necessary articles of furniture for his room on reaching the estate to which he is assigned; whereas an overseer not under one of these three-yearly contracts will have to do all this for himself. The Southampton mail-steamer charge twenty-one pounds for the passage, and sailing-vessels less.

'The writer was not indentured himself, but

has had plenty of opportunities of seeing and judging of the advantage to be derived from such an arrangement. The salary for a beginner is seldom more than fifty pounds per annum, generally speaking only forty pounds; and this is paid quarterly. An indentured overseer usually receives fifty, sixty, and seventy pounds per annum for his three years' term of contract; while perhaps an unindentured man may be in receipt of a larger salary at the end of one and a half or two years' service, as the reward of his industry and steady application to work. In addition to the salary, a pound a month is allowed on all estates to each overseer to defray the expenses of a servant and for washing. The overseers board at the manager's table, who is allowed fifty-two pounds per annum for each. The Colonial Company however, make an exception to this rule, they being more generous, allowing sixty-two pounds, which enables their managers to afford a more liberal diet. This it must be clearly understood is over and above the salary each overseer receives. At the manager's house the overseers receive three meals a day. Few hard-working young men however, find this sufficient, and are obliged to provide themselves with something extra in the way of luncheon at their own expense.

Each manager of a sugar-estate boards the overseers under him exactly as he thinks fit; and I am sorry to remark that some try and do this as shabbily and economically as possible, so that the whole amount allowed them may not be expended, and the surplus serve to defray the cost of any extravagance in which they may have indulged. Those gentlemen, however, who act differently are well known in the colony, and are greatly respected as men who treat their overseers like gentlemen; while the less said about the characters bestowed on the former the better.

Each overseer is expected to be in the "field" in all weathers from seven in the morning, with intervals of rest, to four or half-past four in the afternoon. On large properties, where some of the fields are four and five miles distant from the buildings—the manufactory usually goes by the name of the "buildings"—each overseer is allowed a mule to ride "aback" on. When the field is reached, he dismounts, and the actual superintendence of the work is all done on foot. Some estates have not many mules, and allow *batteaux* (small flat-bottomed punts) instead, with a boy to haul each *batteau* "aback" along the navigation canals, while the overseer sits inside and steers with a paddle.

On Sunday or in the evenings the manager will generally be found willing to lend a mule to an overseer anxious to go off the estate on business or to visit a friend; but it is a distinctly understood thing that no overseer shall leave the estate he belongs to without having first received the express sanction of the manager, or in his absence that of the deputy-manager or head-overseer. Only the very large estates employ a deputy-manager; but every plantation has a head-overseer, who not only is in receipt of a better salary, but enjoys greater privileges than the other overseers. On returning from the field in the afternoon, the books have to

be made up—that is, the money earned by the labourers during that day entered up against their names in the pay-lists, and their names all called over, to ascertain if any have been absent from work without special leave. This occupation takes one or two hours, and sometimes much longer. On Mondays, and sometimes on other days, the work may be a little less arduous than I have described it above; but this is not often the case, and it is frequently much stiffer.

I have now to speak about the night-watches in the manufactory. During crop-time, when sugar-making—or "grinding" as it is called in the colony—is being carried on, the boilers, machinery, and other parts connected with the manufacture of the sugar and rum are constantly at work. Sometimes indeed fire may be hauled from under the boilers for an hour or two in the middle of the night; but generally speaking, the machinery is at work day and night during the period of "grinding." In the daytime an overseer specially set apart for this work takes charge of the manufactory; but the superintendence at night is carried on by each overseer in turn. For instance, if there are five overseers on an estate, each has one night-watch during five consecutive days, and so on for weeks together. If one or two overseers happen to be ill at the same time, the watches follow each other in quicker succession, rendering the work doubly fatiguing. After an overseer has been at work all day and then up all night, one would imagine him unfit to go about his work at all on the ensuing day; but nevertheless he has to do it, and that with the best grace possible. It is needless to say that the consequences of the overseer in charge of the manufactory at night falling asleep may be very serious, and were he detected in such an act, he would receive instant dismissal. These watches are greatly dreaded by most overseers, and do more to make them ill and produce fever than anything else they experience. It is a striking fact that a manager only gets ill perhaps once in six months, whilst an overseer will have been laid up four or five times during a similar period; and it is during crop-time that overseers are nearly always taken sick.

The colony fever, though not often fatal, is a fearful thing in its consequences, utterly prostrating and reducing a man's strength after a few days' illness, and rendering him incapable of doing anything. A sick overseer receives medical attendance, such as it is, gratis; but if ordered wine or other luxuries with which to recruit his strength or tempt the appetite, he will have to provide them himself except in very rare instances. In cases of a very severe sickness or disease attacking an overseer, the manager sends him to an admirable institution in Georgetown called the Seamen's Hospital. A fee of thirty-three shillings a week in advance is asked; and there he receives attendance and every requisite. This hospital, which is open to every one who can afford to pay the above-mentioned fee, is attached to the Colonial Hospital, and a properly qualified doctor is always resident on the premises. There is a similar institution in Berbice, but not so well managed or comfortable as that in Georgetown.

All managers have been once overseers themselves, and a few have been fortunate enough to have obtained managements in so short a period as four and five years after embracing the profession.

The rub then is to keep them. The shortest time however, in which an overseer can hope to become a manager, unless favoured by extraordinary circumstances which seldom occur, is six years; and many have to wait eight, nine, and ten years before obtaining the coveted position. An overseer will have greater chances of accomplishing this by remaining in one employ and bearing up manfully against all trials and disappointments. The colony is full of disappointed planters, who are only too ready to attribute every imaginable thing as the cause of their ill success but the right one.

'He who contemplates becoming a planter should be physically strong, active, steady, and endowed with that rare gift which will be of more use to him than anything else—common-sense. Scotchmen are now and have been for a long time the most successful planters in Demerara, holding the best and most lucrative appointments all over the colony. Such were mostly farmers' sons at home; and young farmers have always appeared to me to be better fitted for, and more able to withstand and cope with the hard work and toil of planting than those reared in any other station in life. Some of the Creoles and coloured men of Demerara make very good overseers, and two or three hold managements in the colony; but they rarely possess the energy and smartness that belong to a European.

'A beginner must expect to meet with what may appear to be great hardships and disappointments in the profession. He may have to put up with indignities and insults from those over him in authority; be always liable to dismissal for trivial mistakes, according to the whim or fancy of the manager for the moment under whom he is situated; and then perhaps, after bearing up against these and other trials, lose his health, as many have done before him. If however, he can overcome all difficulties and keep his health into the bargain, which he will be most likely to do if he abstain from the every-five-minute drinks and swizzles of Demerara, he will surely succeed at last; and the reward it must be remembered is considerable, a manager seldom being in receipt of less than five or six hundred pounds per annum, besides everything found him.

'And now if the reader, being physically fit for the life and inclined towards it, should feel dismayed at this summary of evils, let him not be disheartened, but remember that all occupations carry with them their peculiar trials and drawbacks in possibly as great a degree as does the calling of a Demerara planter. Let him bear in mind that without energy of purpose he can never be successful anywhere.

'I have written this paper in the hope that it will be of use to those in doubt on the subject, by affording them a slight glimpse of what they will have to expect, and by enabling them to judge correctly if they are really fitted for the life they will have to encounter, should they determine to embrace the planter's profession. And lastly, I wish all old planters in Demerara who read this paper to understand that it was not written for their benefit, amusement, or criticism whether friendly or hostile, but solely for those who, not yet planters, are in doubt on the matter, and who do not really understand what Demerara and overseering mean. And I think

it will be plain to any one from what I have written, that these words mean far more than I have either ability or inclination now to discuss.'

## 'BEST-MAN' AT A WEDDING.

CALCUTTA, June 8, 187-

MY DEAR OLD CHUM—In a P.S. added to my letter as the last mail was closing, I told you I had just been foolish enough to promise to be 'best-man' at the wedding of my friend Captain A—, and I said I would give you an idea of how these interesting occurrences are conducted in India—or perhaps I should speak less generally, and say in the 'City of Palaces.' The wedding in question, however, having been a very quiet one, and not on the usual elaborate—and wearisome—scale of Calcutta *wallahs*, it will be necessary to digress a little from the details regarding Captain A—'s wedding, to give you an idea of the general routine.

Shortly before the close of last year, I acted in the same capacity as at this last wedding; and that having been on a large scale, I learned the order of things to be anticipated on getting married in Calcutta, which in addition to giving me the necessary information, created a wholesome horror of ever appearing as principal in a similar scene. Weddings in Calcutta are celebrated either early in the morning or late in the afternoon: generally at the latter time. Small wedding-parties in Calcutta would be considered very large ones in England. On the occasion I mention above, something over two hundred invitations were issued. This is the form, as nearly as my remembrance serves me:

'MR and MRS BROWN-JONES, with compliments to MRS SMITH and family, beg the favour of their attendance at St Timothy's Church on Saturday afternoon next at 5 o'clock, to witness the marriage of their daughter SUSAN MARIA JANE, to MR JOHN THOMAS TOMPKINS.

Cake and wine after the ceremony at No. 6 Guddahwallah Rustah.'

Then for the favoured many—you really cannot under the circumstances say few—who are to tread the light fantastic during the evening and knock themselves up for next day, a gentle hint is added to the invitation just given: 'An evening party at 8.30 P.M.'

The day having arrived, those interested in the couple to be married, or others having a weakness for cake and favours, find their way to church, where the ceremony differs not, I believe, from that performed in England. The subsequent rush for favours most certainly is not less. Those who have received invitations, make their way after the ceremony to the house of the bride's parents, where sundry toasts are proposed, cake and simper—Anglo-Indian for champagne—go the merry round, favours are stolen, bridesmaids worried, the clergyman surrounded as he does the correct thing

in saying something appropriate, and then every one leaves the house: those so invited, to prepare for the evening party; those who are not, to grumble over the omission and feel dissatisfied. Violinists—or rather, to be common-place, fiddlers—carry on the music during the evening; the bride and bridegroom leave later on; and the party is much the same as would be the case in England, excepting perhaps, that the heat is greater, and the dusky servants in attendance more troublesome. And there it ends.

So much for the generality of weddings. Now for Captain A—'s. On the evening preceding the day itself, I went in company with the bridegroom-elect to dine with the future Mrs A—. I saw much more of the family than of my friend and his bride. (I believe they went into the garden to study botany—it was a full moon—but I am not quite certain.) They appeared on the scene as we, remaining mortal, and not having been travelling mentally in ethereal regions, were beginning to get sleepy; so wishing all 'Good-night,' Captain A— and I went home. (He didn't say a great deal on the way.) Arriving, inquiries of the kindest—yet somewhat peculiar—nature were made by two or three friends, and we sat up rather late, silently grieving over the last night of Captain A—'s bachelorhood. Although the wedding had been for some time on the *tapis*, its celebration was brought about rather hastily, in consequence of Captain A— having to leave for another district.

On each side the river Hooghly, a few miles from Calcutta, are several small towns, favoured by newly married couples as resorts to pass that period of supposed felicity, the honeymoon. To one of these—we will say its name begins with Z—Captain A— had telegraphed a few days previously for a purpose easily surmised. Up to the last night he had received no answer; so it was arranged that I should call upon him as early as possible next morning, and in the event of his not having them heard, that I should go to Z— and make arrangements. About half-past five next morning, I was walking across the Maidan in Calcutta, and made my way to Captain A—'s quarters. No reply had been received. Taking a conveyance, I crossed the Hooghly into Howrah, and had the satisfaction of seeing the train I wanted leaving the station just as I entered it. In Calcutta railway arrangements, there is 'railway time' and 'Calcutta time'; the former being, I think, the same as Madras, and thirty-three and a half minutes behind the latter. The next train to Z— left in about three hours' time; so making an early call upon a bachelor friend, I passed the interval. In time not to be too late, I was again at the Howrah railway station, where I found the train waiting.

After a small matter of forty minutes behind time, I arrived at Z—; and inquiring for the next return-train, found I might catch it if I hurried. I got into a gharry—a four-wheel conveyance very similar to a cab—drawn by as miserable a pair of three-quarter-starved, broken-down ponies as ever had the misfortune to behold the light of day. I told the driver to go quickly,

promise of a 'bucksheesh' (Anglicé, a tip) having the desired effect; and telling him to go to X—'s hotel, he did his best to exhaust his strength in 'larruping' the wretched ponies aforesaid most zealously. After driving about three-quarters of a mile, the conveyance stopped at a fair-sized building, but which was closed. This was a great disappointment; and I quite understood then how it was that Captain A—'s telegram had remained unanswered.

With the loss of as little time as possible, I made the best of my way to another hotel, Y—'s, whence after having completed the arrangements for the reception of the 'happy pair' in the evening, I hurried back to the station as fast as the miserable ponies were capable of taking me. I found I was too late. The station-master (a native) said the train had been late every day for the past fortnight, but to-day, for a wonder, had been up to time. I regretted its punctuality. There was no other train until five o'clock; at which hour it was expected that I should be standing at the altar of St —'s Church, effulgent in a black coat, something nice in the way of neckties, and tender in pants. It was now a little past two o'clock. I knew a boat could not reach Calcutta in time, as the tide was contrary, and the road was far too long for a conveyance to be successful. Whilst considering the difficult situation, I thought I had better let Captain A— know what was going on. There was a spirit of wickedness in me to frighten him on his wedding-day. I wrote out a message thus: 'X—'s hotel no existence—no other here—self delayed until six.' I imagined the tearing of hair and the distress of my friend as he sent word to his lady that the hour for her sacrifice had not yet come, as there was no place for them to go to. But I remembered the bright blue eyes of the bride, the long attachment, that Captain A— had seen the roughest phase of this world's ups and downs, and that his own inconvenience or annoyance would be forgotten in regret for unnecessary trouble given to the good lady who was to be his wife that day; so I tore up the form and wrote another: 'Delayed—no X—'s hotel—arrangements made.'

Then came the necessity for making my own arrangements. The line of rail on which I had travelled that morning skirted the river Hooghly. I knew from previous roamings that another line also skirted the other side of the river, and in some places close to it. I sauntered outside the station, and asked the first man I met whether there was a railway station near to the other side. He said there was one directly opposite, and that there were lots of boats to take me across. I knew that on this line trains were frequent on Saturday, because the Volunteers came for rifle-shooting. I went to the station-master and said: 'Babu, it is absolutely necessary for me to be in Calcutta by half-past four, and as your train does not arrive until five, I am going to try the other line. Can you give me any idea when the first train leaves the opposite station?' No, he couldn't; he thought the first train went at half-past six. I called a gharry, and was telling the driver to go as fast as possible to where the boats were. Finding he spoke Bengali, of which I knew but a little, I asked the station-master kindly to tell the man what I wanted. The

station-master's advice, translated, was: 'Go slowly to where the boats are, and the Sahib will give you a bucksheesh beyond your fare.'

I didn't know much Bengali; in fact all I knew of it was from its similarity to another up-country language which I knew pretty well, and which was supposed to be a corrupted version of pure Bengali. By this I was able to understand what the station-master said. I therefore addressed him in what would probably be called the arrogant voice of the rampant Anglo-Saxon, and then drove off in the gharry.

Ah! that conveyance! Its memory haunts me as I write. Calcutta 'hackney carriages' are of three classes. Z— possessed one of the first—always retained by the hotel at which I had arranged for my friend—none of the second, but a more than ample supply of the third. Riding in the last named reminded me of a description of travelling on a camel: 'sitting on a music-stool screwed up to its highest, placed on a heavy cart without springs, travelling on a newly macadamised road, and drawn by a stumbling blind horse.' My unlucky head was constantly coming into contact with the roof of the gharry; an intoxicated man in a superior conveyance would have sat still compared with how I sat; turning corners made me tremble visibly; and all things considered, I almost wished, with a view of equalising my personal misery that day, that I had allowed the first telegraphic message to go! Here was I being bruised and shattered, all because another man was to be married. Enduring that third-class gharry journey must have been as severe to my unfortunate person as I should imagine was the shock, at contemplated matrimony, to my friend's nervous system.

The distance was much longer than I expected; or perhaps, time being so precious, it seemed longer. Passing the hotel on my way, I went in and ascertained about a conveyance for Captain A—. The only 'first-class' one was to be sent to meet the mail-train that night; and lest any other passengers should take a fancy to it, I arranged with the coachman to retain my card until a gentleman accompanied by a lady asked for it, and they would be the right persons to take the gharry. Reaching the ferry station at length, I called for a boat. Several men offered to ferry me. All the boats save one were heavy and cumbersome-looking; so I took the exception, a very small narrow craft. Our destination was exactly opposite; but it was not possible to cross in a straight line. We crept along the bank against the tide for a long long way. The sun was dreadfully hot; my small hat afforded scarcely any protection; I had no umbrella; there was shelter of no description in the boat; so there I had to sit, exposed to the scorching sun of that hot May day, and nearly blinded by the intense glare from the water. It seemed as though an immense furnace had been let loose amongst us. After going a long distance up the river, we got into the middle of it, and then went down with the tide in a slanting direction to our destination. It was unnecessary to row in going down, for our speed was fast enough in itself.

When the boat stopped, I asked the boatmen the direction of the railway station, not seeing it from the river. They pointed it out, or professed to; but being no wiser than before, I asked them to

accompany me, that I might save time. O no! They couldn't think of going in such a sun!

'Very well,' I said; 'then I shall not pay you until I am in the station.'

This had the desired effect; for they rose to accompany me, and we reached the station, running, in about three minutes. I had time only to get my ticket when the Calcutta train was off. I was very tired indeed. What with being up late the night before, early this day, the anxiety, worry, and uncertainty, together with standing in the full glare of the sun in a small hat and without any shelter, I certainly had had quite enough of assisting other people to get married. The train, a slow one, stopping at every station, had nineteen or twenty miles to go, and so I went fast asleep. When I reached Calcutta, four o'clock had struck. I hastened to the house where I was staying, snatched up my clothes, got into a gharry, went off to Captain A—'s quarters—who said as a consolation that he was certain I should not be late—jumped into the black coat and the neat thing in neckties, and was alongside the altar precisely at 5 P.M.

I trust you will not be disappointed at my failing to give a few pages descriptive of the ladies' toilets. Let it suffice to say that every lady looked superlatively nice, and that amongst so much silk, lace, muslin, fans, and perfume, I was considerably confused. This I am sure you will take for granted.

The ceremony over, favours fastened on, names signed, and so forth, we hied to the bride's house. The simpkin had a very soothing effect; for to tell the truth, I felt rather upset. Glancing at the bride and bridegroom, I repented that I had ever been heartless enough to think for a moment of deceiving them with a telegram. Some one came and whispered that I should propose the health of the newly married pair. Speech-making is a thing I have never excelled in, for the simple reason—I have scarcely ever tried it, and I was at a loss to know what to say. Whilst considering, the bridesmaids gave me some cake. They had made me a victim. One refused to believe I was not married, so pinned the favour on the right side of my coat. Another—I fancy she hoped I wasn't—fastened it on the left; so I was resplendent in double rows. My coat-tails were similarly adorned; and according to a recently married lady, I looked like a sheep dressed for Christmas. This ceremony over, the toast again came forward.

'My dear friends?' No; that would not do, because several were present whom I now met for the first time. 'Ladies and gentlemen?' This scarcely reached the tender years of the bridesmaids. There was one resource left, and I availed myself of it as follows. 'Ahem! Never having been either a bride or bridegroom, I am quite at a loss to know what to say. I believe, however, that on painful occasions such as these'—Here came a small shower of corks from the gentlemen; the ladies threw pieces of cakes at me, or rather the icing, which I suppose they thought, being harder, would have a better effect upon my head, which was probably, &c.; and in the general confusion I proposed the health of the bride and bridegroom.

I almost forgot how the evening passed. It was late before I began to prepare to get ready to

commence to think about the time. I remember there was music and singing. The wedding had been so hurriedly brought about that but few friends were present; otherwise I doubt not dancing would have been largely patronised. As it was, we enjoyed ourselves wonderfully. The next occurrence was going into supper, which passed in the pleasant manner that such things should. Shortly after, the bride and bridegroom took their departure. They were profusely pelted with rice; a sad proceeding, considering that there was a famine raging in Southern India at the time. Coming in from the veranda, it appeared that I was guilty of being a bride, bridegroom, or some other equally miserable being, for every one commenced to pelt me with rice in the most energetic and undignified manner. For some reason or other I appeared to be a fair object whereon to perpetrate pleasantries (!) of all kinds, which brought the evening's amusement to a happy issue. In fact I began to feel so used up with the duties pertaining to quartermaster in the first place, and master of ceremonies in the second, that I hailed the approaching break-up with secret delight.

Wishing my friends 'good-night,' I got into the carriage kindly reserved for me, and was driven home; and whilst dozing on the comfortable cushions, I thought that it was all very strange. I had gone to church a single being, and was returning home as such. My friends had gone a couple of singles, and left a single couple. Yes, it was strange. Here was I, tired and sleepy; whilst I supposed that the newly—

Excuse this abrupt ending. I did not expect to fill so much space. The postman is in the veranda, and I cannot longer stay. Salaams to all.—Ever yours,

S—B—.

#### RAILWAY CLAIMANTS.

A SERIOUS item on the debit side of the half-yearly balance-sheets of all big railway companies is the amount paid to the public as compensation for the loss or pilferage of, or the damage done to, merchandise in transit or while in the Company's possession. Many thousands of pounds have, as a rule, to be deducted from the current half-year's receipts on this account, although the companies do to some small extent recoup themselves by the periodical sale of all lost and damaged goods of which they find themselves the unwilling depositaries. Another more or less serious item on the wrong side of the balance-sheet is the compensation paid for personal injuries; but with that we have nothing now to do.

In addition to the amount paid in hard cash to the public, the Companies have to maintain a numerous and costly staff of clerks for the investigation and settlement of merchandise claims. This is an item of expense which might be very materially reduced if the claims sent in by the public were, as a rule, just and reasonable ones, or even if they were not in many cases actual breaches of commercial morality—little better, we are sorry to say, than barefaced attempts at

swindling. For even setting aside such claims as may be sent in by people who 'live by their wits,' which but too often means a habitual infraction of the eighth commandment, it would really seem that many otherwise respectable people, who would scorn to rob their neighbours of a penny, and would as soon think of committing suicide as of picking a man's pocket of his watch or purse, become strangely perverted in their views of *meum* and *tuum* when they have to deal with a corporate body like a railway Company. There is an old saying that a 'board' has no conscience; but there are many thousands of people in business who seem to think that every railway Company has a purse, and a long one too, into which, if they can only succeed in dipping their fingers without detection, they are rather to be congratulated than otherwise, as having done a smart thing for themselves without any one being the sufferer by it.

I have been led into these remarks by a little incident which happened to me the other day. I was travelling by railway, when, at a certain station, an old acquaintance, whom I had lost sight of for many years, rushed at the last moment into the compartment in which I was sitting. After mutual recognition and handshakings, we began to compare notes. It was then I learned for the first time that my friend Keene was employed in the Traffic Claims Department of a certain railway Company. In the course of our conversation he supplied me with sundry particulars concerning the duties of his situation, and gave me, in addition, several illustrations of the peculiar phase of commercial dishonesty commented upon by me at the beginning of this paper.

When a claim is sent in to the head-office (said Keene) for loss or detention of, or damage to, goods, annexed to the actual complaint of the public there come certain explanatory particulars from the chief of the station at which the claim has in the first instance been made. As soon as possible after a complaint has been made at a station, either the chief himself or a properly accredited officer goes down to the warehouse or wharf to inquire, on the Company's behalf, into the extent of the alleged loss. This inquiry having elicited a report, the next step is to ascertain where and how the loss or damage originated. It may have originated at the station from which the goods were sent, or even, as not unfrequently happens, before the goods were put into the railway Company's hands at all. It may have taken place in transit, or it may be due to carelessness or accident on the part of some of the Company's servants after the goods were received at their destination. In any case, further minute inquiries have to be made, and in the majority of instances, a number of letters to pass between the two points of transit, before the case can be finally summed up and reported on by the chief of the station, who recommends to the head-office, either that the claim be paid in full, that it be declined *in toto*,

or that the intermediate course be adopted of offering say one-half or two-thirds of the sum demanded by the aggrieved claimants.

It is now that the head-office takes the case in hand and decides what shall finally be done. Each batch of papers is carefully gone through, new points being raised, and fresh correspondence with the station entered into when necessary; and if, after all this, the claim seems to be a really fair and reasonable one, instructions are promptly sent that it shall be paid in full. But should the claim be an unusually heavy one, or should any element of doubt or suspicion have entered into it, some one is sent from headquarters (your humble servant, for instance), who traverses the whole question afresh on the spot, sees every one concerned in the matter, and generally winds up by visiting the person or firm making the complaint, and arguing or persuading them into some reduction of the sum originally demanded.

When a claim arises on goods which have been carried over more than one line of railway, if on investigation it cannot be decided on which particular line the damage occurred, the Companies concerned agree to divide the loss by a mileage proportion in accordance with the distance the goods have travelled over each line. The division in such cases is made by the Railway Clearing-house.

Persons who claim for damage or delay in transit, usually display a strong desire to throw the goods concerned on the hands of the railway Company, by which means they are enabled to claim for their full value. One great point with our officers is to induce the public to accept the goods, sell them to the best advantage, and make their claims for actual loss only. When we cannot succeed in so doing, the goods are stored away at headquarters, there to await the annual clearance sale of all lost and damaged property, unless they be of a perishable nature and require to be sold at once, in which case they are offered to the first likely customer, and the Claims Account debited with the balance of loss on the double transaction.

Some time ago we had two hundred quarters of wheat consigned to a certain firm with whom we had done business once or twice previously. Owing to bad sheeting, two truck-loads of the wheat were slightly damaged by wet. A claim was sent in for the full value of the grain. It then became my business to wait upon the consignees, with the view of inducing them either to receive the whole of the wheat and claim for actual loss only, or to accept that portion of it which was undamaged, and charge us with the value of that which the rain had partially spoiled. They positively declined to accede to either proposition. They threw the whole of the wheat on our hands, ordered a fresh consignment of two hundred quarters, and pocketed their profit on both transactions.

What was to be done? The damaged portion of the wheat would quickly deteriorate with keeping. A customer must be found without much delay. Now, it is a habit of mine, and one which I find rather useful for a person in my position, to keep an eye on the fluctuations of the produce and other markets as notified in the various published price-lists. I was aware that at this particular time grain was slowly but surely rising in

value, great fears being expressed that the coming harvest would be a partial failure. For several days I watched the prices go up a fraction *per diem*. Then, when I doubted the wisdom of waiting any longer, and taking with me samples of the wheat both damaged and undamaged, I made my way as fast as steam could carry me to certain large starch-works in the north where the purchase of inferior and partially damaged grain is a matter of frequent occurrence. I saw the manager, produced my samples, struck a bargain on the spot; and found that, leaving out of consideration the carriage which had to be allowed for, the Company were something like seven pounds in pocket by the transaction.

On one occasion a claim for fifty pounds was sent in, for damage in transit to a large driving-wheel consigned to a well-known firm of Yorkshire manufacturers. Subjoined to the claim came a report from our station-agent, who stated that he had seen the wheel; that the fracture in it was a very serious one; that before the wheel could be used it would either have to be sent back to the founders, or else some skilled workman be sent from there to repair it on the spot; that the manufacturers would be put to great inconvenience while such repairs were being effected, and that in his opinion the claim was perfectly just and legitimate.

Our people at headquarters were inclined to coincide with the views of the station-agent and to settle the claim off-hand. It was only by accident that I saw the papers. When I had read them through, I asked that they might be given to me for a few days, and that the settlement of the claim might be delayed till I had made my report. I hardly know what it was that roused my suspicions in the case, but roused they certainly were. I went down to the station and examined all our people there who were in any way connected with the affair, but still I found nothing tangible to lay hold of. Not satisfied, I went away for two or three weeks about my other business, letting my beard grow meanwhile. Then I went back to H—, and without letting any one at the station know of my arrival, I took up my quarters at a lowish public-house in the workmen's quarter of the town. I had previously rigged myself out in a second-hand slop, a pair of fustian trousers and an old travelling-cap. After this I had not much difficulty in finding out which were the two public-houses chiefly frequented of an evening by the hands employed at the works to which the wheel had been consigned. Being Yorkshire born, the dialect came natural to me.

It was only necessary that I should 'stand treat' now and then, and avouch myself as a 'chap' out of work, as a mate in want of job, to find myself hail-fellow-well-met with the very men whose acquaintance I was just now desirous of making. Their talk naturally turned a good deal on the 'shop' and matters connected therewith, in all of which I professed to be greatly interested. Were they in want of hands? Was it likely I should get a job if I applied? They didn't know. I'd better see th' gaffer. Mappen I might get takken on.

But the engineer was the man whose company I most affected. What sort of machinery had they? How many boilers? What was the dia-

meter of their driving-wheel? It came out at last what I wanted to hear, either on the third or fourth night after my arrival at H—.

'We had a new driving-wheel a few weeks ago,' said the engineer, a south-country man, as he rapped on the table for another tankard of ale. 'The railway Company contrived to break it, and it was thought at first it would have to be sent back to be mended. However, I persuaded the governor to let me try my hand at it; and with that I fitted a plate over the crack, and contrived to bolt it down so hard and fast that I believe it's now the strongest part of the wheel. Anyhow, there it is at work in the engine-house, and I'll wager my head that it lasts as long as the old one did.'

My friend the engineer was evidently proud of his handiwork.

Shaven and properly dressed, I called next morning on the manager. 'I am from the railway Company,' I said; 'and have called respecting your claim for damage done to your driving-wheel.'

'Yes, to be sure,' responded the manager smilingly. 'Fifty pounds. You gentlemen are rather long-winded in such matters; but better late than never. I will draw up a receipt in three minutes.'

'A receipt for five pounds,' I said.

'For fifty, my dear sir—fifty.'

'What!' said I; 'claim fifty pounds when I happen to know for a fact—a fact, mind you—that this very driving-wheel is now at work in your engine-house, and that the damage done to it was so trifling that one of your own hands repaired it without difficulty at a cost of certainly not more than a couple of pounds for labour, time, and material. We are willing to meet you in a fair spirit, but nothing more. I am empowered to offer you five pounds in full discharge of our liability. If that will not satisfy you, you may take the case into court and leave it for a jury to settle.'

For ten minutes the manager raved and stormed, but at the end of that time he gave me a receipt for the five pounds.

The next case to which I shall refer was one in which the Company were assessed for damage alleged to have been sustained by a printing-press on its way from London to a certain small market-town. The claim was for sixty odd pounds, and was accompanied as usual by the report of our agent at the station. It was stated that the press was so broken as to be utterly valueless, and would have to be replaced by an entirely fresh one. In this case everything seemed so reasonable and straightforward that the claim was paid in full and the matter looked upon as at an end. The conduct of the case had not been mine, and I had only a superficial knowledge of it; but for all that, when I was next at the London terminus and found myself with an hour to spare, I made it my business to find out the address of the senders of the machine. To those senders I went, introduced myself, and then asked them to be good enough to inform me whether such-and-such a press had ever been sent back to them for repairs, or whether another one had been sent to replace it. Neither one nor the other, they told me. They were not even aware that the press had been broken in transit.

A few days later, I found myself at the station to which the press had been consigned. Our agent, on being interrogated, was clearly of opinion that the press had been damaged beyond the possibility of repair, and had been sent back to London; but when requested to trace the back-entry through his books, he was unable to do so, neither could he trace that a second press had been sent to replace the first one. Inquiry in the town elicited that our friend the printer was doing a capital trade for so small a place, and that he seemed to be at no loss for machinery to carry out his orders.

Armed with the information thus obtained, I determined on taking an exceedingly bold step, and that entirely on my own responsibility. When I explained my views to the chief of our detective force, he agreed to join me in the adventure; so, on a certain fine afternoon, we marched together into the printer's shop. We were both utter strangers to the man.

'You do printing here?' I said interrogatively.

'Yes, sir; printing of all kinds.'

'If I were to give you an order of some magnitude, could I rely upon its being completed expeditiously?'

'Without a doubt, sir. No one in the town or neighbourhood has got such a plant as I have, or can turn out as much work as I can in the same space of time.'

'That will do,' said I. 'I am not here to give you an order, Mr —, but to ask you a few questions. I am in the service of the —— Railway Company, and this gentleman is a detective officer.' Here my friend rattled the handcuffs in his pocket. 'I want to know what has become of the printing-press, for damages to which the railway Company paid you sixty odd pounds on the fourth of last month.'

'The press was so much damaged,' said he, 'that I was glad to sell it for a mere song.'

'Perhaps you can oblige me with the address of the person to whom you sold the broken press?'

The man was very pale by this time, but he answered brusquely enough: 'Perhaps I could oblige you, but I certainly won't.'

'Probably you replaced it with another?'

'I did.'

'From the same firm that supplied you with the first one?'

A moment's hesitation, and then: 'That's my business, not yours.'

'In any case, the second press would reach you by railway. On what date did you receive it?'

'My business again.'

'Am I to understand that you positively decline to answer any of the questions I have put to you?'

Another rattle of the handcuffs. He hesitated, pulled his beard, glanced from one to the other of us, and then spoke. 'Look here, Mr Whats-your-name, the railway Company settled my claim five weeks ago. If they hadn't been satisfied with my statement, they wouldn't have done that. The affair's at an end. I have got my money, and I mean to stick to it.'

'We shall see about that,' said I. 'Look you here, Mr —. The very printing-press for which we paid you over sixty pounds as being irreparably damaged, is now at work in these premises.'

You never obtained a second press either from London or elsewhere. Your claim was an utterly fraudulent one, and you have laid yourself open to a criminal prosecution by acting as you have. However, not to be too hard on you, my friend and I are willing to wait here for a couple of hours ; and if at the end of that time, you bring us back the sixty odd pounds obtained by you under such dishonest pretences, I will engage that no further proceedings shall be taken in the matter. But should you decline to accede to this very reasonable request, I shall go from here to the nearest magistrate and obtain a warrant for your arrest.' His bravado vanished in a moment. He vowed and protested that he had not sixty pounds in the world, nor half that sum. He would remit it next week—in a day or two—tomorrow. But he failed to move me from the position I had taken up. Then he put on his hat and went out, presumably to see his friends ; and before the two hours were quite over he returned with the money. My detective friend and I went on our way rejoicing.

## LAND TELEGRAPH LINES.

## WORKING.

IN a recent paper we gave an account of the nature and construction of land telegraph lines, especially those of our own country. It shall now be our aim to explain the modes in which they are worked for the conveyance of intelligence.

In each of our great towns there is one central office, through which all foreign and provincial messages pass on their way to their destinations ; and a number of local offices for local traffic. At these central offices we see the working of the lines carried out on a great and varied scale ; but the essential arrangement of apparatus is the same in all. In all countries the arrangements at central offices are much alike. We shall take as our chief example the metropolitan office at St Martin's-le-Grand.

An important feature of a central office is the *switch* or *connecting-board*. It is a contrivance on which all the lines centring in the office are made to focus. It is generally in the form of a mahogany board fitted with a number of screw terminals, to which the line-wires can be brought. The iron wires of the open-air lines are never themselves brought inside the building ; but copper wires coated with gutta-percha or india-rubber are used as connecting-wires or *leads* between the iron line-wires outside and the various instruments within the office. The advantage of a switch is that it enables lines in different parts of the country to be connected-up together, or cross-connected as it is called, and permits a line to be connected to a different instrument for working, if its proper instrument should get out of order—all at a moment's notice, and by the mere shifting of metal pegs or plugs, without the need of disturbing a single wire. At the London Central Office as many as eight hundred lines thus centre on one board.

In the instrument-room the work of transmitting and receiving the messages is carried on. There are several different kinds of receiving instruments in use in the United Kingdom. On the most important circuits, for instance between London and Glasgow, or London and Liverpool, the ink-writing receiver of Morse is used in connection with the automatic transmitter of Wheatstone, and the line is in addition worked on the 'duplex system' of sending two messages *in opposite directions* at the same time. On less busy circuits the 'Sounder' is employed in connection with the duplex system. On circuits where the traffic is great only in one direction, there is no need of the duplex system, and the Morse or Sounder is sufficient in itself. On country and local town circuits, the Single Needle Instrument is used, with or without duplex as the case may be ; and in some out-of-the-way places, the Hughes Type-printer or the Bell Instrument is still to be found at work, although they are relics of the days before the lines passed into the hands of the government.

The Morse and Sounder are the instruments principally to be seen in the Central Office, London. They are fixed upon long mahogany tables, at which the operators sit and manipulate them, or work the signalling-keys in sending messages. Twelve hundred operators, chiefly young ladies, are daily employed in the instrument-room, which contains two-thirds of a mile of tables. Batches of messages are distributed to the different operators by means of pneumatic tubes, so that the noise and bustle of messengers in the room are avoided. This large hall, over twenty thousand square feet in area, with its hundreds of beautiful instruments, worked by female clerks, its admirable order and stillness, is indeed one of the sights of London.

The telegraphic circuit is, as the reader knows, composed of the line-wire, the earth, and the apparatus connecting them at each end. At the sending end the wire is connected to the earth or ground by the signalling-key or sending instrument, the battery and the earth-plate all in circuit. At the receiving end the wire is connected to earth by the receiving instrument and the earth-plate there. The signalling-key is a lever or pair of levers worked by the fingers so as to complete or interrupt the circuit, according to the order of signals in the Morse code, and allow certain succession of currents to flow along the line to the distant station, where they will render themselves sensible by their effects on the receiving instrument, and be readily interpreted by the same code. The kind of key employed depends on the receiving instrument. All receiving instruments act by means of some well-known sensible effect of the current. The Morse instrument is one of the earliest of all. In the 'fall' of 1832, Samuel Morse, an American artist, conceived the idea of it while on a voyage from France to the United States, and entered it in his note-book. Three

years later he constructed the first rough working model; and in 1837 it was first tried on an experimental line between Washington and Baltimore. The principle of the instrument, discovered by Sturgeon, a Londoner, is, that when a current of electricity circulates in an insulated wire round about a piece of soft iron, it magnetises the iron; and the polarity of the magnetism depends on the direction of the current in the wire. When the current stops, the magnetism vanishes; but remains while the current flows. Morse applied this property in the following way. He took a soft iron core wound with a coil of insulated wire, and over one end of the core he pivoted an iron lever, so that when one end of this lever should be attracted downwards to the core, the other end should 'cant' upwards. To this end he attached a small metal disc, smeared in ink, and over the disc he caused to pass continuously a strip or tape of paper. With this contrivance, whenever a current was passed through the coil of the soft iron core, the armature end of the lever was attracted downwards to it; while the other end pressed the inky disc upwards against the paper, on which it left its mark in the form of a line drawn in ink. The length of this line corresponds with the duration of the current in the coil. A momentary current marks a dot on the paper; a longer current marks a dash. Morse combined these two elementary signals the 'dot' and 'dash' into a code of signals representing letters, which now goes by his name, and is even more universal than his instrument, for it is used in connection with all instruments except those which indicate with printed characters. A despatch by the Morse Instrument then, is simply—as we have on a former occasion indicated—a tape of paper with a series of dots and dashes marked along its middle. The speed by the Morse is from thirty to thirty-five words a minute by hand-sending.

The Sounder is merely a modified Morse. The ink and paper are dispensed with, as the clerk reads the message by ear. The free end of the lever is made to tap up and down between two stops of different material, and the difference in tone of the two sounds produced serves to characterise them to the ear. Strange as it may appear, the ear is more easily educated to read by the Sounder than the eye by the Morse; hence the Sounder is growing in favour; partly owing to this and partly because of its simpler nature.

The Bell Instrument—formerly introduced by Sir Charles Bright, and still in use on some Irish circuits—is also read by the ear. It consists of two bells of different tone, and the clapper of each is worked by electro-magnetism, like the lever of the Morse or Sounder. Unlike these instruments however, it is worked by 'double currents'—that is to say a positive current is made to strike one bell, and a negative current the other.

The principle of the Single Needle Instrument is the discovery of Oersted the Danish physicist,

that when a current flows in a wire round about a magnetic needle in the direction of its length, the needle tends to set itself at right angles to the wire. On reversing the direction of the current in the wire, the position of the needle is reversed. It is clear that by the use of positive and negative currents, and the corresponding movements of the needle to right or left of the wire, an intelligible telegraph could be arranged. In 1832 Baron Schilling of Cronstadt found that by coiling the wire a number of times round the needle the force of the effect was correspondingly increased. In 1836 Professor Münnck of Heidelberg exhibited Schilling's discovery to his students, among whom was William Fothergill Cooke, a young Indian officer. His was the eye that saw the great value of the discovery as a telegraph. Fired with the idea of its importance, he devised and put in trial at Heidelberg, within three weeks after, a working system of telegraph. His instrument consisted of three coils of wire, each having a horizontal needle free to move on its pivot. He employed three circuits, one for each needle, and by the movements of these needles, made out an alphabet of twenty-six letters. In England he united his plans with those of Wheatstone, and together they brought out the first working system.

The first public line in England between Paddington and West Drayton was opened for traffic in 1838, just forty-one years ago. It was worked by Wheatstone's improved Needle Instrument, which had five vertical needles, required three circuits, and made each signal by the combined movements of two needles at a time. The clever capture of a murderer named Tawell by means of the new telegraph, soon gained for it a wide popularity. The Single Needle is, through the Double Needle, the direct descendant of Wheatstone's Instrument. In it there is only one coil and one vertical needle; it is operated by double currents in a single circuit, and the alphabet is the Morse code, a 'dot' being indicated by a right-hand deflection of the needle, and a 'dash' by a left-hand deflection. The deflections of the needle are curbed by stops. Over three thousand of them are in daily use in the postal service of the United Kingdom; and their well-known forms, resembling an American clock with a green face, are to be seen at almost every railway station. Its speed is from twenty-five to thirty words per minute.

On all long circuits an important instrument is the Relay. Owing to the leakage from a land-line, and the weakening effect of the resistance of the wires, a current in a long circuit is too feeble to work the ordinary receiving instruments such as the Morse and Sounder; but it is sufficiently strong to work a special instrument called a Relay. The Relay is merely a go-between, and enables the weak current in the line to work the receiving instrument by the help of a local battery at the receiving station. As early as 1837, Samuel Morse saw that a current far too feeble to move the

heavy lever and inking disc of a Morse, would be strong enough to move a very light lever, and thereby close the circuit of a local battery which should be strong enough to work the ordinary Morse. This is the principle of the Relay, and the Translator or Repeater, which is in reality an automatic sender. The Relay enables a weak message to work the receiver; the Translator forwards a weak message farther on by repeating it automatically with fresh battery-power. In America they work from New York to Chicago, a distance of one thousand miles, by the use of a single Translator at Buffalo. The most useful European Relay is Siemens' Polarised Relay. On the great Indo-European line it enables London to work with Teheran, a distance of three thousand eight hundred miles, without retransmission by hand.

We come now to Wheatstone's Automatic Transmitter. On lines where there is no great pressure of traffic, the ordinary hand-signalling suffices. A clerk can transmit at the rate of thirty words a minute, or even thirty-five. But there is no reason why the speed should be limited by the quickness at which a clerk can work the sending-key, since the speed of the current on land-lines is practically instantaneous, and automatic mechanism can be made to take the place of the clerk's fingers. All the clerk does in sending is to regulate the succession of contacts between the battery and the line, and this can be done equally well automatically. As far back as 1846, Alexander Bain, a well-known Edinburgh clock-maker, conceived the idea of regulating the succession of contacts by a strip of moving paper punched with a succession of holes, just as the cards in a Jacquard loom regulate the pattern of woven cloth. Bain's idea was taken up and brought to practical success by Wheatstone in 1855.

In Wheatstone's Automatic Transmitter, the message is first punched out in a double row of holes along a tape of paper; the right-hand holes correspond to dots, the left to dashes. This perforated tape is then passed through the automatic key or Transmitter, and regulates the succession of contacts. The contacts are made by two spring plungers, one for each row of holes. As each punched hole passes under the plunger, it falls into it, and makes contact with a metal plate underneath as a hammer falls on its anvil. When the paper space between two punched holes is passing a plunger, it is kept apart from the anvil, and contact with the line is for that time broken. Thus currents of definite length, and from one or other pole of the battery, can be transmitted automatically with great rapidity. The paper is moved by clockwork at any desired speed. The actual rate of sending between London and Edinburgh is sometimes as high as a hundred and thirty words a minute.

Without the Automatic Transmitter the Post-office could not forward the Press Association news. Sometimes as many as four intermediate stations are introduced in circuit, and supplied with news simultaneously at the rate of a thou-

sand words in twenty minutes. A number of clerks can be employed punching several portions of slip, which are one after another passed through the Transmitter in order, the same punched slip serving to send the message over several different lines.

As the Automatic Transmitter increases the speed of sending four-fold, so the Duplex system of working doubles the carrying capacity of a wire. By this system a message can be sent while another is being received, the messages seeming to cross each other on the way. It was invented by Dr Gintl, an Austrian telegraph director, as early as 1853; but subsequently modified by various electricians, and recently revived, after a period of neglect, by Mr Joseph Barker Stearns, an American. In duplex working, the ordinary apparatus slightly modified suffices, and the whole secret lies in the arrangement of it at each end of the wire. There is a receiver in circuit at each end; but it will be sufficient to confine our attention to one end of the line, since the arrangement at both ends is precisely similar. The essential feature of duplex consists in connecting-up to the real line an 'artificial line' or circuit in every electrical respect equivalent to it, and placing the receiving instrument intermediate between them in such a position that the sending current from the battery divides itself into two equal streams, which flow in opposite directions through the instrument, and neutralise each other's effect upon the needle or marker. In this way the sending current setting out from a station does not affect the receiver at that station; one half of it flows along the line to earth through the receiver at the distant station, where it signals, and the other half passes harmlessly to earth through the artificial line at the sending station itself.

The condition that currents sent out from a station shall not affect the receiving instrument there, but shall leave it quite free to be affected by currents coming in from the distant station, is the essential condition of duplex.

We have now to see how it is that currents sent out by the distant station produce their effect at the end we are considering. We have seen that so long as the sending current divides itself equally, and each half flows freely through the real and artificial circuits, no signal is made on the receiving instrument. If however, one of these currents were stopped either in whole or in part, this balance of currents would be disturbed, and the receiving instrument would be affected. This is what the sending currents from the distant stations do. Each signal current sent from the distant station stops, either wholly or partly, the sending current from the near station in the line, and disturbs the balance, so that the instrument at the near station makes a signal. Thus the sending of each station upsets the electric balance at the other, and in this way each station has power to make the receiver at the other to signal.

The duplex system is now in general use on land-lines in America and England. The quadruplex system is a more recent advance, and is also in use in America and England. In 1857, two years after Dr Gintl shewed the feasibility of duplex telegraphy, Dr Bosscha of Leyden expounded the possibility of transmitting two messages in *the same direction* simultaneously, and

pointed out that by the combination of this system with duplex, a quadruplex system of sending would result. In 1874 Messrs Edison and Prescott of New Jersey invented a thoroughly practicable system. It consists in employing two sending-keys at each end of the wire, so arranged as to give rise to four distinct electrical states of the line, when they are worked together in sending two separate messages simultaneously. These four distinct states are interpreted by two distinct receiving instruments. The duplex or counter system of Stearns is combined with this plan for double transmission; and thus two messages are sent both ways at the same time.

In the ordinary or simplex system of telegraphing, each station sends and receives messages by turns. The operator can by the mere turning of a handle or 'switch' connect-up his key to the line in order to send, or his receiver in order to receive. In the duplex system however, no switch is necessary, since no change in connections is required, and sending and receiving go on simultaneously. This is one incidental advantage of the system; and another is to be found in the facility with which operators can speak to each other and get words repeated. On the New York to Chicago circuit, one hundred and eighty-two American messages—equivalent to one hundred and thirty English messages—are sent per hour by the quadruplex system. On our own circuits worked by the Wheatstone Automatic Duplex, one hundred and sixty English messages are sent per hour; so there is a gain of thirty messages for our method. From thirty to forty thousand messages pass through the Central Telegraph Office, London, daily. Of the daily number, about one-sixth are foreign messages. The two busiest occasions of the telegraphic year are the Derby race-day and the sending of the Queen's Speech.

To provide for the exigencies of the Derby of 1878, a staff of thirty-five first-class hands were sent to Epsom. Six special wires besides the ordinary local wires were employed; and to 'put through' the enormous traffic to and from the field, as many as six Wheatstone Receivers, five Wheatstone Automatic Transmitters, six Morse Instruments, and two Single Needles, were kept at work. In the four days of the races, 15,519 messages—in value £1,750, 4s. 8d.—were taken. At Goodwood and Ascot, the traffic is almost as great. The Queen's Speech is however, the more important event; and telegraphists all over the country vie with each other in their eagerness to rapidly transmit the royal address. Arrangements are made beforehand to send it from the central station *direct* to as many places as possible. It is usual to send it to nearly two hundred towns, including such places as Wick, Oban, Tralee; and to about sixty of these it is sent *direct*—that is, without retransmission. 'The work of signalling,' says one of the Post-office officials, 'commenced at 2.8 P.M., that being the moment at which the signal to "start" was received from the House of Commons. In a twinkling, the fingers which had been nervously grasping their "keys" for some minutes, came down in the shape of "dots" and "dashes" to the tune of forty words a minute or more (punching); and the Wheatstone Transmitters, wound up to the highest pitch of eagerness, were let loose with their familiar "whir." While we were only as yet looking on to see what it

all meant, "Finished to Leicester!" shouted one excited operator, and "Ditto to York!" shouted another at the same moment. This was at 2.14 P.M. to the moment; so that the nine hundred and eighty-three words of which the Speech was composed were transmitted to these towns in six minutes, or at an average speed of nearly ten thousand words an hour.

The great towns—Birmingham, Manchester and Liverpool, Nottingham, Leeds, and Bradford—received the Speech simultaneously, on what are called the "express circuits;" and to these the work of transmission was accomplished in the short space of eleven minutes. To Scotland and Ireland—including Aberdeen, Dundee, Belfast, Cork—the Speech was finished within twenty minutes; and to the great majority of places where transmission was effected direct, within half an hour.' In order to send these nine hundred and eighty-three words, fifty thousand separate holes would have to be punched on the Wheatstone slip, and fourteen thousand separate signals would have to be recorded in ink by the receiver at the receiving station.

#### SWEET VIOLETS.

SENT BY A LADY IN THE COUNTRY TO A FRIEND IN TOWN  
(APRIL 29).

BIRCHEN boughs are leafless still,  
And the wind is keen and chill;  
On the hedges brown and bare  
Scarce one bursting bud I see;  
Only, in this sunny nook  
Scented violets welcome me.

Ah, that fragrance! how it brings  
Back old days on rosy wings—  
Days when Life's blue sky was clear,  
When the simple hearts of youth  
Gathered treasures all the year  
Of unfading love and truth!

Fragrant are they now as ever;  
And as each small flower I sever  
From its sheltered woodland home,  
Forms beneath the cold earth sleeping  
Once more down the pathway come  
With glad eyes that know not weeping!

Violets! ye bring to me  
Many a sunny memory;  
And as one by one I gather  
You, the first, best gems of Spring,  
Seemeth it to me your sweetness  
To sad hearts some cheer must bring.

Friends the token might receive  
Your lowliness is meant to give;  
So, with wishes true and kind,  
I shall send you where the city—  
Growing nothing half so fair—  
Shall receive with tender pity,  
Your small blossoms, sweet and rare!

J. C. H.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, 47 Paternoster Row, LONDON, and 339 High Street, EDINBURGH.